

basic bottom line of what we were trying to do is not make radical change, but to clarify the rights of individuals that are being considered to go under a guardianship or conservatorship to better protect those rights. We're also clarifying the process that would be followed in carrying out a guardianship and conservatorship. Now keep in mind these individuals, this could cover anybody, but primarily we're talking about, for instance, children or disabled individuals, elderly, mentally ill and the question is, do they lose their rights or not under the decision to go under a guardianship or conservatorship? And I think the concern was to be very careful about taking that step and not take it without clear and convincing standard as clarified in this amendment, that there has to be clear and convincing reason to go to a guardianship or conservatorship and we also make it clear that it has to be the least restrictive choice under that process. We also make some other changes. For instance, an attorney and a guardianship, guardian ad litem can both represent an individual. The attorney can represent the person what they want, the guardian ad litem is on representing of the court and evaluates that person and reports back to the court. Currently, it's unclear whether that can happen, and there are some other changes like that that essentially are an attempt to allow for individuals to have their rights respected and balanced in the decision-making process. In addition to those elements there were changes in veterans in terms of their guardian-conservator language that was found in LB 514 and that was amended into LB 497 and advanced and so this amendment is combining the two bills and the action. And if it wasn't for the fact that this bill was...actually should be consent calendar legislation, I wouldn't be offering the amendment on General File, but because of the amendment that amended the other bill in there we'll never get to it on consent calendar but in my view this is essentially a consent calendar bill that has a broad base of support and a lot of involvement over the years in developing it and I would ask for your support for the amendment.

SPEAKER BAACK PRESIDING

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Before we proceed to the next item of business, I would like to introduce some guests this morning. They are guests of Senator Coordsen. We have 130 eighth graders from Crete High School in Crete, and their teacher and they are in the south balcony. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Mr. Clerk, an